

Delaware Receives \$7.5 Million Grant to Expand Trauma Supports for Students and Families

Governor Carney's Executive Order 24 directed state agencies to focus on impact of trauma

WILMINGTON, Del. – Delaware will expand its supports for children who have experienced academic, social, and behavioral health challenges as a result of exposure to trauma and toxic stress thanks to a new federal grant. Governor John Carney announced on Monday that Delaware will receive almost \$7.5 million over five years from the U.S. Department of Education's Trauma Recovery Demonstration Project Grant Program.

Delaware's project aims to strengthen collaborations among families, schools and mental health service providers.

"We know that many Delaware children arrive at school each day with their own unique challenges. In many cases, that includes exposure to trauma," said **Governor Carney**. "It's our job to help those children cope with the effects of trauma, so they can focus on learning in the classroom. This grant will help us connect families, school leaders, and health providers to make sure that Delaware children are receiving the best services possible."

Through the grant, the Delaware Department of Education will:

- Increase screening for a larger population of students

- to identify those experiencing trauma;
- Augment immediately available support services for identified children;
- Strengthen partnerships with agencies that can provide additional short- and long-term services for referred students; and
- Enhance understanding by teachers, staff and providers about signs and symptoms of trauma and the broader adoption of trauma-informed approach.

This new grant will build upon work already underway in the First State to support trauma-informed practices in schools, state agencies and other providers across Delaware. “We must support parents and families in understanding mental health challenges and delivery systems so they can be informed consumers on behalf of their children,” said **Susan Bunting, Secretary of the Delaware Department of Education**.

“We believe that this grant will have a significant positive impact on the learning outcomes of our students and will add to the evidence base around the effective trauma sensitive strategies in schools,” said **Stephanie Ingram, President of the Delaware State Education Association**. “The mental health and social services assistance provided by this grant will help in developing resilient, engaged, and academically successful students while also providing safe, stable, and supportive school environments.”

In October 2018, Governor Carney signed [Executive Order 24](#), directing the [Family Services Cabinet Council](#) to help mitigate the impact of adverse childhood experiences and build resilience in children, adults and communities.

The Family Services Cabinet Council is working to identify gaps in available services along the prevention and early intervention-treatment continuum for children and their caregivers statewide. Its members also are charged with developing a comprehensive plan focused on early intervention

for children and their caregivers exposed to adverse childhood experiences in order to help prevent abuse and neglect.

Governor Carney also worked with the General Assembly to pass a three-year, \$75 million [Opportunity Funding](#) program that will support students from low-income families, and English learners. The Opportunity Funding package sets aside \$15 million for additional mental health and reading supports in Delaware schools.

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